

**INTERNAL SECRETIONS OF THE PANCREAS**—Ciba Foundation Colloquia on Endocrinology, G. E. W. Wolstenholme, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., B. Ch., Editor, and Cecilia M. O'Connor, B. Sc., Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1956. 292 pages, 100 illustrations, \$7.00.

This book is based upon a symposium on "The Nature and Actions of the Internal Secretions of the Pancreas" which was held in London, England, from the 21st to the 23rd of June 1955. It is truly an international collection of famous names in chemistry, physics and the biological sciences.

The subject material in general consists of fundamental research such as reports on the destruction of pancreas cells by chemical means, and the metabolic effects so produced. Several chapters are devoted to very technical discussions on fractionation of insulin, the chemical structure and the three dimensional structure of insulin. Metabolic effects of insulin are presented such as the effect upon the permeability of tissue cells to sugars, effect on transport of sugars, and hepatic action.

An excellent review and discussion, as well as original work on glucagon is presented, including its chemical and biological characteristics and metabolic effects. It is work such as this which may lead to eventual improvement in the treatment of diabetes and other disturbances of carbohydrate metabolism.

This book is not for the general practitioner or general internist. It is very valuable for those who are doing basic research on the pancreas and for those who are doing clinical research in this field. The chapters on glucagon are stimulating and give rise to new avenues for clinical investigation.

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**A MANUAL OF PRACTICAL OBSTETRICS**—Third Edition—The Late O'Donel Browne, M.B., M.A.O., M.A., Litt.D., F.R.C.P.I., F.R.C.O.G., Master, Rotunda Hospital, Dublin—Edited and Largely Rewritten by J. G. Gallagher, M.D., M.A.O., F.R.C.P.I., M.R.C.O.G. John Wright and Sons, Ltd., Bristol, Distributed in U. S. A. by Williams and Wilkins Co., Baltimore 2, Maryland, 1956. 265 pages, \$7.50.

This book was clearly written for the general practitioner. While it has the virtue of brevity I hardly think that it would be suitable for students since the discussion of the various subjects does not contain enough background to invite association and memory. Even for the American practitioner I would doubt that it would have great appeal since much of it has a distinctly foreign flavor. For example, in the treatment of various conditions, pharmaceutical preparations of one sort and another are referred to by their trade names which are wholly unintelligible to us. Again, the events of normal delivery are described with the patient lying on her side, a method of delivery which is totally foreign to us. The viewpoints expressed are related to home deliveries, though the discussion follows through to the hospital wherever appropriate.

There is a conventional coverage of the subject matter of obstetrics though the accents are placed differently from those of American texts. Rather scant consideration is given to the effects of pregnancy upon the maternal organism and upon the effects of diseases upon the pregnant woman. A list of the "General Diseases in Pregnancy" might be of interest: Cardiac (one page), gonorrhea, appendicitis, phthisis, pyelitis, anemia ("Severe anemias with hemoglobin percentages of 20-30 are common in Ireland"), glycosuria, retroverted gravid uterus, incarceration of retroverted gravid uterus (several pages are devoted to these last two subjects), ovarian cysts and fibroids, pseudocyesis.

There are excellent descriptions of the events and management of labor associated with the various presentations and positions of the fetus. Particularly good is a description

of vaginal examination in labor, how it is to be done and what is to be expected from it.

Evidently episiotomies are not recommended in Ireland except in connection with operative delivery, and so there is a prolonged consideration of perineal lacerations and their repair. Silk worm gut is advised for the repair of such tears.

Demerol and scopolamine are preferred for analgesia, while chloroform seems to be favored for delivery. Pudendal block, spinal and caudal anesthesia are regarded as dangerous.

When delivery from below seems mechanically difficult, e.g. in occiput posterior positions when anterior rotation cannot be accomplished, or after a trial of labor in cases of borderline pelvic contraction symphysiotomy is advised, and I believe very good results have been reported from its employment. However, it is an operation which is virtually unknown in this country.

Prophylactic external version is advised for breech presentations.

"Partus Serotinus," or postmaturity is recognized—"if genuine, induce labor."

Antepartum hemorrhage is well described and for the most part the management advised is similar to that employed in this country. The same may be said of toxemia of pregnancy, though there seems to be more emphasis upon glucose and barbiturates and less upon hypotensive drugs than we are accustomed to.

The author is a staunch believer in the value of x-ray pelvimetry. His description of contracted pelvis and their effect upon labor is both practical and sound.

There are two particularly strange paragraphs, I thought, one on "how to plug a ruptured uterus" (with gauze) which is included in the discussion of rupture of the uterus, and the other on "Insanity During Pregnancy," which I am certain would make our psychiatrists shudder with horror over the lack of appreciation of modern concepts.

This book, then, might be well suited to the general practitioner in Ireland who is called upon to care for his obstetrical patients in their homes, but I do not believe that it is suitable for either students or practitioners in the United States where entirely different conditions exist, and many of the routines even, are so very different. This is not to say that there are not many interesting and sound observations to be found in the book. Certainly any obstetrician would be well rewarded to browse through it.

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**THE PRACTICE OF PSYCHIATRY IN GENERAL HOSPITALS**—A. E. Bennett, M.D., Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, University of California School of Medicine, Eugene A. Hargrove, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, University of North Carolina, School of Medicine and Bernice Engle, M.A., Research Associate, Department of Psychiatry, University of California School of Medicine. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1956. 178 pages, \$4.00.

This excellent book is written for anyone who may have cause to be interested in the treatment of psychiatric patients in a general hospital. Dr. Bennett has been one of the outstanding pioneers in this very important and neglected field. He writes from experience. He has also asked other competent experts to write chapters in their special fields.

A great deal of fine practical information is given covering such aspects as financing, architecture, legal problems, administration, nursing, occupational therapy, social service and the day hospital plan.

This reviewer directed such a psychiatric unit for five years. I believe this is the most complete and useful presentation of this subject to date.